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Reply to Office Action of April 7, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Prior to this Amendment, claims 1, 5-7, and 9-21 were pending in the application.

Claim 1 is amended to clarify how new attributes are added in the system. Independent claim 12 is similarly amended to clarify the creation of new attributes according to an aspect of the invention. No new matter is added with support found in Figure 4 and corresponding text of Applicant's specification.

Claims 1, 5-7, and 9-21 remain for consideration by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the April 7, 2005 Office Action, claims 1, 5-7, and 9-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,278,982 ("Korhammer") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,789,252 ("Burke"). This rejection is traversed based on the following remarks.

Referring initially to independent claim 21, the Office Action does not make out a proper obviousness rejection based on Korhammer and Burke. The rejection of claim 21 was presented similarly to that of claims 1, 12, and 15, which are directed (at least in part) to the idea of allowing a market maker to extend the attributes used to create a transaction framework. Claim 21, in contrast, is directed to a system with mean-plus-function limitations and calls for selecting a response by employing a complex sorting scheme that is not included in claims 1, 12, and 15. Specifically, claim 21 calls for the request for transaction means to function to allow selection of a response including sorting based on price when the price difference exceeds a preset amount and if not to sort based on another or secondary attribute provided in the response.

Independent claim 21 as pending includes a "complex sorting scheme" feature of the invention described at least on page 21 of the specification. Particularly, the request for transaction means enables an organization to select a response based on sorting by price if price differences are significant but otherwise

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based on secondary criteria or attributes. This feature is not shown in Korhammer or in Burke, and no citation is provided in the Office Action for such an analysis feature. Hence, Applicant requests that the rejection of independent claim 21 be withdrawn.

Turning now to independent claim 15, this claim is directed to a method for creating new attributes that were not available in the set of relevant market attributes. Claim 15 is written to call for specific steps that are taken to create the new attribute, and these creation steps are not shown by Burke (or Korhammer). As a result, the combined teaching of Korhammer in view of Burke does not support a rejection of claim 15 and claims 16-20 which depend from claim 15.

The Office Action notes that Korhammer does not teach an extensible transaction framework in which market attributes used for creating a request for transaction and/or for analyzing responses can be added to existing attributes. Burke is cited for providing this teaching at its Abstract, col. 43, lines 13-67, and col. 7, lines 59-67. Burke does teach adding an attribute such as for a product description as can be seen in Figures 14 and 15 and teaches that the new attribute can be used in searches as shown in Figure 50. However, Burke fails to teach or even suggest the specific new attribute creating step called for in claim 15 that includes "determining a set of attribute constraints" for the new attributes.

This lack of teaching can be seen from a review of Figure 14 and the related text of Burke and from a study of col. 24 which describes how base objects and legacy objects are extended. Applicant also closely studied the "Customer Buy-from-Inventory System (CD) Example" in col. 43 and "Managed Negotiation System (MN) Example" in col. 44. There is no teaching that a created new attribute would be defined by determining a set of attribute constraints. Instead Figure 14 teaches a user interface for creating an attribute and col. 46, lines 44-54 teach the types of attributes that can be created. Because there is no teaching of creating a new

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attribute based on a set of constraints, claim 15 and claims 16-20, which depend from claim 15, are believed in condition for allowance over the two cited references.

Further, claim 16 calls for the new attribute creation step to include "determining a data entry control type" and "determining an attribute analysis framework option" and these limitations are not shown by Burke (or by Korhammer). The Office Action again cites Burke at the Abstract, col. 43, lines 14-67, and col. 7, lines 59-67 but at these citations there is no discussion of the additional features presented in claim 16. For this additional reason claim 16 is allowable over Burke.

Claim 1 as amended is believed allowable for reasons similar to those provided for allowing claim 15. In particular, claim 1 requires that that at least one new attribute is "defined by setting an attribute value constraint defining at least one of selectable default values..., value ranges, and a mandatory or optional setting for the at least one new attribute." Korhammer fails to teach extending a set of attributes. Burke does not teach the creation of a new attribute by defining attribute value constraints for the new attribute including setting value ranges, setting default values, and/or making entry of the new attribute value optional or mandatory, e.g., see Figure 14 and corresponding text of Burke teaching the addition of an attribute to a product specification. Hence, the system of claim 1 is not obvious in light of the combined teachings of Korhammer and Burke. Claims 5-7 and 9-11 depend from claim 1 and are believed allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Independent claim 12 is directed to a method for using a request for transaction framework and the reasons for allowing claims 1 and 15 are believed applicable to claim 12. Further, claim 12 calls for the at least one user-defined attribute to be "assigned an attribute analysis framework option defining allowable sorting or filtering for the at least one user-defined attribute." Such an assignment is not shown or made obvious by the teaching of Burke which merely teaches

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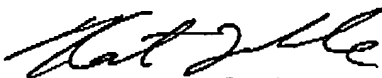Reply to Office Action of April 7, 2005

adding an attribute to product specification in Figures 14 and 15 and at col. 46, lines 44-53 but fails to teach that as part of such attribute creation there could be or should be any limitation on sorting or filtering based on that attribute is performed. For this additional reason, claim 12 is believed allowable over Korhammer and Burke. Claims 13 and 14 depend from claim 12 and are believed allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

Conclusions

In view of all of the above, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

No fee is believed due for this submittal. However, any fee deficiency associated with this submittal may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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